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Young People's Pastor**

Amos R. Wells

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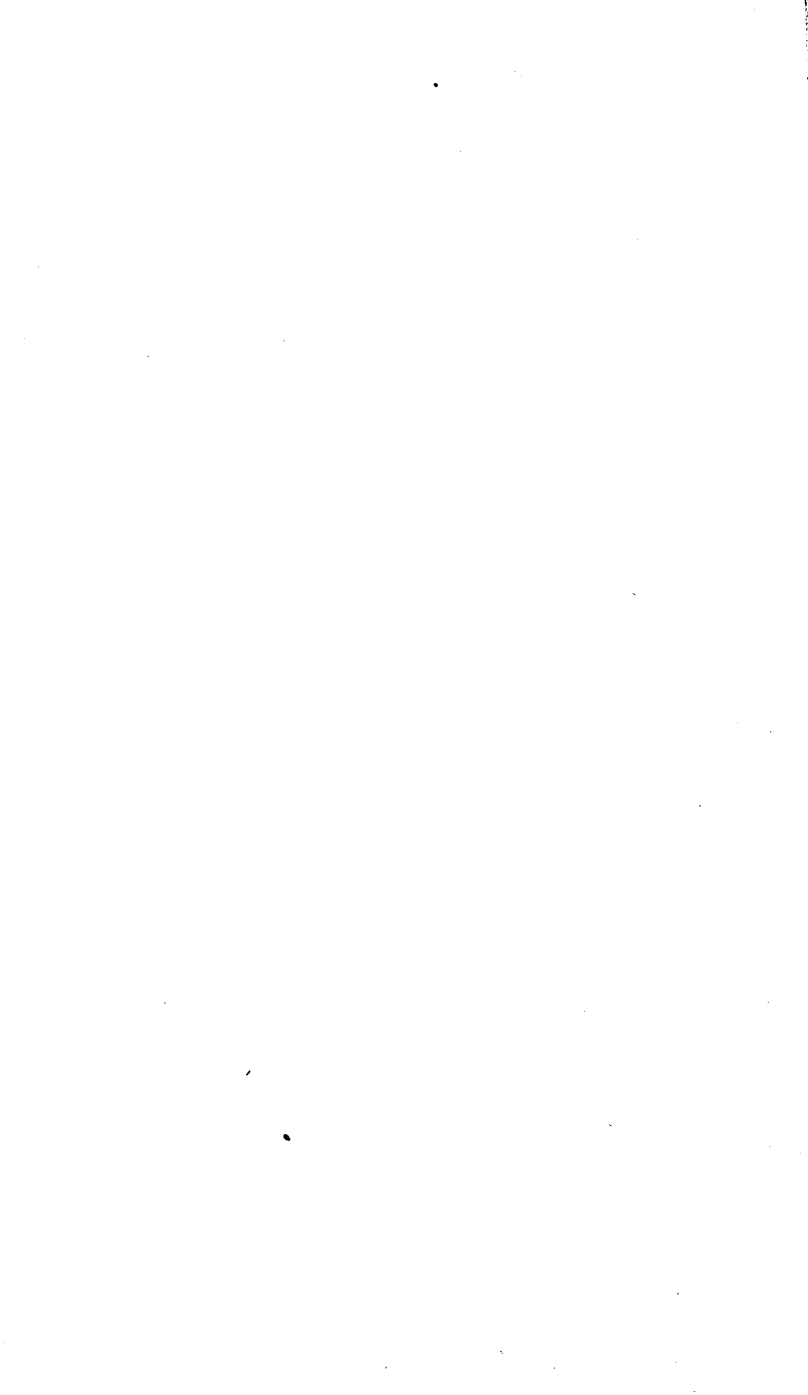
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## THE YOUNG PEOPLE'S PASTOR





# The Young People's Pastor

A Book Showing, from the Experience of Many Pastors, How a Pastor May Most Successfully Conduct His Young People's Society

By AMOS R. WELLS

*Author of "Sunday-School Success," "Three Years with the Children," "Studies in the Art of Illustration," "Sunday-School Problems," etc.*



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To the Pastor Who is Reading  
This Book



SOMETIMES hear it said,  
“If the Christian Endeavor  
Society does not succeed, it is  
the fault of the pastors.”

At the outset, I disavow  
any such sentiment. I have  
seen the society fail, through the fault of  
frivolous young people and worldly parents,  
where the pastor was bending every energy  
to make it succeed; and I have seen it suc-  
ceed, by virtue of zealous and godly young  
people, where the pastor seemed to be bending  
every energy to make it fail.

No; there are too many factors in the  
problem to allow us to lay the entire blame  
for failure on the pastors, or give them the  
entire credit for success.

And yet the Christian Endeavor Society has  
won its triumphs chiefly through the zeal, the  
approval, and the devoted activities of pastors.  
It has not had a history like that of the Sun-  
day school, compelled for years to meet out-

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side the church and contend against the bitter hostility of ministers and church officials. From the beginning Christian Endeavor, born in a church and nurtured by a consecrated pastor, has been held close to the heart of the Church Universal. From the beginning, its national trustees, its union officers, the speakers at its conventions, the guides and directors of its local work, have been in overwhelming preponderance the pastors.

This is as it should be. The church has allowed function after function to slip from its grasp, and be wielded by outside organizations. Let it never lose its hold upon that vital activity, the training of the church of the future.

I have written this book to emphasize the need of larger attention to this matter on the part of pastors and churches, and to indicate the lines along which labor may most profitably be directed.

Let no one think that I, a mere layman, would venture to counsel ministers of the gospel, or advise them how to perform those enormously difficult tasks which they have assumed so unselfishly and conduct so heroically. Far from me be such presumption.

But for fourteen years I have been in close touch with the most successful ministers of all

denominations, men especially successful in the leadership of young people. I have observed their methods and caught their spirit. In this book I am only their mouthpiece. I am only passing along the plans that they have found workable and fruitful. I am only reporting their frequently expressed sentiments, and forming a composite picture of their conduct. Association with these Christian Endeavor pastors has been and still is a wonderful inspiration to me. I dedicate this book to them.

I am conscious—as conscious, certainly, as any of my readers can be—how incomplete are these pages, how fragmentary is this picture of the young people's pastor. I know how complex is the relation between ministers and those in their care, and how absurd would be the attempt in any book, however large, to consider that relation fully, even with respect to this single branch of church work. Doubtless there are many local difficulties and perplexities that are not discussed in these chapters.

But I am chiefly solicitous that the spirit I have tried to embody herein should animate all young people's pastors,—a spirit which, as I have said, I am trying to transmit from

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those pastors that have come closest to the hearts of the young. If we are in the right attitude toward these problems, if we seek a solution in the right spirit, then however intricate and difficult the problems may be—and for each pastor, after all, they are peculiar and require a distinctive treatment—the dear Lord of all young lives and hearts will surely point out the solution.

AMOS R. WELLS.

*Boston.*

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# The Young People's Pastor

## CHAPTER I

### THE PASTOR IN THE PRAYER MEETING



IN the first place, let him be in it when possible. The Christian Endeavor pledge and system of work build up an organization that is wonderfully self-perpetuating. It has succeeded, largely because it requires so little labor from outside to make it succeed. And yet when the pastor thinks how much work he has to put into the older prayer meeting of the church to make it go, and what would be the effect upon it of his continued absence, he will see clearly how absurd it is to expect a vigorous young people's meeting if the pastor is always or generally absent. Notwithstanding the immaturity of the young Christians, the Endeavor plan allows the pastor to leave the society to itself more safely than any other part of his church work; but if it is left

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to itself altogether, and the young people become careless in their religious work, that only has happened which might have been expected.

Moreover, what a chance at his young folks is afforded the pastor by the Christian Endeavor prayer meeting! Here he can see in a body his most spiritually-minded boys and girls, young men and young women. He can get close to them easily. He can influence thirty or forty of them by the expenditure of only a little effort and an hour of time. If such an opportunity did not exist, how eagerly it would be sought, and how highly it would be prized! Before the Christian Endeavor society came into being, what pastor would not have congratulated himself if once a month he had been able to bring together a company of young people such as now meet, of their own accord, in his church every week?

Of course, there will be times when the pastor cannot attend the Christian Endeavor meeting; but if he is regular in his attendance, his absence will be understood to be necessary, when it occurs. But suppose the young people's prayer meeting comes just before the evening service of the church, as it often does. Even then, if it seems best to

## The Pastor in the Prayer Meeting 13

keep the Christian Endeavor meeting at that time, the pastor may usually attend it. A devout young people's meeting will put him in the best of frames for the coming sermon. Indeed, he will get many a point for his discourse, applying it to the needs disclosed by the meeting, or responding in it to the feelings and the thoughts there expressed. If the sermon is a thing of life, it will not be harmed in the least by a thing so full of life as an Endeavor prayer meeting.

I do not think that a pastor can help the young people much, if his attendance at their meetings is felt by him to be a bore or a burden. His inner thought will out. But if he goes because he loves the young people, and rejoices in this opportunity of worshipping with them, actually getting help from them while he gives it to them, they will speedily perceive his spirit, and respond to it.

Where should the pastor sit in the young people's meeting? Some pastors always sit in front, beside the leader, and certainly any pastor should feel free to take that position of authority and government. In my judgment, however, it is best for the pastor to vary his position, now sitting in front, where he will exhibit his headship of the society, now sitting

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in the midst, where he will show himself one of the young folks, and now perhaps sitting on one of the rear seats, where he may, by his presence, check the back-seat gigglers.

How often should the pastor lead the Endeavor prayer meeting? In some societies he is asked to lead the meeting once a month, the consecration meeting being suitably assigned to him. That is too often, in a large society where there are many young folks that need to be trained in the leadership of meetings; but it is none too often in the small societies.

At any rate, the pastor should lead more frequently than other Endeavorers, and should feel free to tell the prayer-meeting committee if there is any particular subject he would like to bring before the society, or any particular time when he would like to lead the meeting, giving his reasons.

One caution, however. The pastor's leadership should be an example for the Endeavorers of how to perform that helpful service, and it will not be a useful example unless it is within the reach of their own abilities. Therefore the pastor, in his leading, should study both simplicity and brevity. He should not make his opening remarks so long and brilliant as to discourage the young leaders who are to

## The Pastor in the Prayer Meeting 15

come after him, nor his plans for the conduct of the meeting so complex and difficult that they cannot imitate him. Let him ever bear in mind the Christian Endeavor ideal—that the Society is to be a training school in religious work.

The same thing needs to be said, of course, regarding the pastor's ordinary participation in the Endeavor prayer meeting. It should be an attainable model for the young folks—not long drawn out, nor ornate, but to the point, clear, and short. Just an anecdote and an application are enough, just a Bible verse and a word about it, just a poem read, with a sentence or two fitting the poem to the topic. And equally simple, and brief, and susceptible of their imitation should be his prayers.

Keeping in mind this ideal of a training school, the pastor should not allow himself to be used as a prayer-meeting crutch. The leader, for instance, is likely to call upon him to offer the opening prayer or the closing prayer; but if such a request comes very often, he should enter a public protest against it, and give the reason why.

There is one purpose for which I wish our pastors would more frequently assume the leadership of our prayer meetings, and that is

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to "draw the net." If the meeting has been an impressive one, and the pastor thinks that some have been moved who are usually indifferent, why should he not at the close simply take charge of affairs for a few minutes, and give an invitation for Christian decisions? Thus every Endeavor meeting would be a possible revival. To watch for signs of spiritual awakening, and take prompt advantage of them, is the pastor's blessed task, and the Endeavor prayer meeting gives him a superb opportunity for it.

It is a growing custom among the societies to assign to the pastor the last five minutes of each meeting. The leader reserves those minutes, and when the time has come, says simply, "We shall now hear from our pastor." This arrangement gives the pastor a chance to sum up the teachings of the evening, and clinch impressions. It gives him an opportunity to draw the net. It affords him the closing word. It serves as a suitable transition to the evening service which generally follows. It emphasizes the pastor's relation to the society, and takes him out of the category of ordinary members. It gives him a chance to praise the members, if the meeting has been a good one, and to repeat with hearty commendation some testimony or

## The Pastor in the Prayer Meeting 17

thought that deserves such approval. Altogether, it is a most useful and thoroughly practicable custom, which should be adopted by every Christian Endeavor society in the world.

I should like to emphasize the value of a word of praise from the pastor. If he will go to the young leader, who thinks, perhaps, that he has made a failure, and cheer him with a sentence of warm approval, by that single sentence he may have won for his church a worker that will bring uncounted blessings to it. A bit of praise of the young folks' meetings when he is talking to the older church-members will be a mighty stimulus to the society. Just an earnest whisper in the ear of a young boy or girl who has given some stammering testimony, may decide the child's whole future.

Yes, there are many opportunities for effective pastoral work in the Endeavor meeting. Strangers may be introduced to the society. An invitation to the other church services may be given to all the strangers present. Denominational matters may be brought before the young people for their knowledge and action. The older church-members may be brought in, one by one, to become familiar with what the young folks are doing, and gain perhaps some

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new inspiration for their own religious work. A sunshiny pastor will irradiate good cheer by his very presence, and an energetic pastor will make the meeting more vigorous by his very bearing. The Christian Endeavor prayer meeting is a great strategical centre for pastoral work.



## CHAPTER II

### THE PASTOR IN THE BUSINESS MEETING



**T**HAT the pastor should be in the Christian Endeavor business meeting as a general thing, ought to go without saying. What pastor would think of being absent from the church business meeting? And is not the Christian Endeavor society a part of the church? If the society is what it should be, a training-school for the church, then its business meetings are a training-school for the church business meeting. If in the future years you are to have accuracy in the church business meeting, you must seek and obtain accuracy in the Christian Endeavor business meeting. If you want the coming church business meeting to be brisk, to the point, full of inspiring suggestions, you must implant those qualities in the Christian Endeavor business meeting of the present.

The main function of the pastor in the Chris-

tian Endeavor business meeting is to keep this ideal before the young people—that in their business, as well as in all their other religious work, they are training themselves to be worthy workers in the church. As an aid to that end, I would set apart in every Christian Endeavor business meeting a time for the pastor's report on the relation of the Christian Endeavor society to the church. Here he will tell how the Endeavorers should be fitting themselves for church activities better than they are now, and will make a specific suggestion as to what the Endeavorers may do to further the church work even with their beginnings of capacity and skill.

Still further to emphasize this point, the pastor may sometimes invite the business meeting to be held at the parsonage, following it with a good social time. If an especially fine report is read by any of the committees, he may quietly ask the chairman of that committee to read that report at the next church prayer meeting. If there is a church paper, he may give in the next number some of the best points made in these reports. And often at the church business meeting he may make room for a report to the church of the Christian Endeavor work, given by the president of

## The Pastor in the Business Meeting 21

the society. Thus the Endeavorers will come to have a forward look, and their business will take on new life from this larger thought.

For himself, the pastor's ideal should be to become the real centre of the society's activity, as represented in the business meeting. If the pastor has been a part of the various committee work reported at the Christian Endeavor business meeting, he will be sure to be there and to be a power in the meeting. If he has kept aloof from this work, he will be aloof in the meeting, though he sit in the very centre of the company.

But I must not be understood as suggesting that the pastor take charge in any formal way of the business meeting. Perhaps once a year he may preside, just to give a model of how to do it; but generally the president or the vice-president should preside, and the pastor should give the president in private whatever hints as to the conduct of the meeting he may wish to give. In some societies it may be necessary for the pastor to conduct for a time a class in parliamentary law—a work that he can make very enjoyable; but in the business meetings themselves he should merely make motions now and then, like the rest, though of course he should occasionally make difficult and un-

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usual motions to test their knowledge and develop their resources.

One of the great things the pastor can do for the business meeting is to add life, vivacity, and cheer. It will do an amazing amount of good if after some excellent report or admirable suggestion he start a round of applause or interject an exclamation of approval: "Good!" "Listen!" "Do it!" "Bravo!" "That's right!"

And it is the pastor's prerogative to close the meeting with a few words of praise for whatever has been good in it, and of exhortation to continued and increased diligence. He will review and emphasize the good suggestions that have been made. He will warn against discouragement. He will point them to the rewards. And he will hold up before them the one inclusive and all-satisfying reward, our Saviour's "Well done, good and faithful servant."

It is at such times that the youth-loving pastor finds his best opportunities, and manages to preach his most effective sermons.

## CHAPTER III

### THE PASTOR OVER THE COMMITTEES



Y virtue of his office, the pastor is a member of every committee of his Christian Endeavor society. He has a right to oversee all their work, to drop in on their meetings, to put in frequent words of advice or warning.

Indeed, has he not more than a right to do these things? Is it not also his duty? Here are these young people being trained by the very thorough and complete system of Christian Endeavor committee work, to be the church workers of the future. In what better way can the pastor work for the church of the future than by directing this training? Does not this important and delightful task inhere in his pastoral office? In what better or easier way can he exert an influence upon the church of the ages?

Why should not the pastor invite each committee to spend an evening at his house at least once during their term of office? And if it is

early in the term, so much the better. But if this is for any reason not practicable, at least he can keep in mind the times and places of their committee meetings, and attend them when he can.

My ideal pastor is an oracle on Christian Endeavor methods. He possesses all the books upon the various lines of committee work, and he reads the freshest articles. Moreover, he does his own thinking and planning. Not only, therefore, does he suggest this plan and that in the committee meetings and in private conversation, but the committee workers come naturally to him for help in their perplexities, and for bright ideas when their own are exhausted. "How can we arouse new interest in our prayer meetings? How can we set the Endeavorers to reading missionary books? How can we better our singing? What more can we do for the Sunday school?" These and a hundred similar questions he will be glad to receive, and he will be ready to answer.

Especially, as I say more at length in the next chapter, he will work upon and with the executive committee, which is his particular field. There he meets with the chairmen of all the committees, and there he influences all the society work. If he has time for only one

## The Pastor Over the Committees 25

committee—an “if” I should be loth to grant—that should be the one.

The committee next in importance for the pastor is certainly the lookout committee. This is so important that the Model Constitution expressly names certain things that it must not do except in conjunction with the pastor—dismiss members, for instance. The pastor can greatly aid this committee by suggesting young persons that would probably join the society, and sending the committee after them. In this way, too, the pastor will be able to draw many a stranger directly into the church work. The pastor may help, too, by watching the young people, and telling the committee when he thinks that this or that is ready for the next step—to become an active member from associate, or to begin to lead meetings, or to join the church. And, conversely, the pastor will find it the greatest possible advantage to have this little company of bright young people who have made it their business to watch the spiritual condition of their fellows, and who will often be able to put him on the track of souls just ready to come into the Kingdom.

If I were a pastor, I should want regular reports from the lookout committee. I should

want to use them in the work of getting the young people and their comrades to join the church. I should be willing to aid them by talking with delinquent Endeavorers upon whom they have failed to make an impression. When young folks come before the church officers and are examined for church-membership, I should have in mind the lookout committee, and suggest to them that the best place to make proof of their new loyalty to Christ is in the Christian Endeavor society. In these ways, and many others, the pastor and the lookout committee might work together.

And similarly the pastor will be an assistant to all other committees. He will hint to the Sunday-school committee that Susie Brown would probably go into the Sunday school if she were asked. He would tell the missionary committee about some capital new book or fresh article on missions which they might set the society to reading, or introduce into their next missionary meeting. He will let the flower committee know of sick people, or aged people, or people in trouble, to whom they may send their flowers, and he will ask them now and then for special decorations in harmony with the theme of his sermon. Now and then he will want the help of the music committee



in the church prayer meeting or the Sunday evening service.

In many shrewd ways the pastor will stimulate this committee work. Usually a passing question will be sufficient. To the chairman of the social committee: "We haven't had a Christian Endeavor social for some time, have we?" To some member of the lookout committee: "You are getting in some new members, are you not?" To the president: "You didn't have many at the last business meeting, did you?" Then this question may lead up to a discussion, or it may not, but the hint will bear fruit.

Many times, of course, the pastor's stimulus will be given just by a word of praise spoken in private, written in a letter to some chairman, given on the conclusion of some committee report in the business meeting, or even proclaimed before the entire church.

One service that the pastor can perform for the Christian Endeavor committee work will hardly be performed by any one else. He alone is likely to see to its progressive character. As to Jack Spriggins, for instance. He served on the social committee this term. Is not he far enough advanced to do good work on the missionary committee? The

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pastor will know his young people, he will watch their developing capabilities, he will view the situation as a whole. Therefore he should always be placed upon the Christian Endeavor nominating committee, and would be amply justified in asking for that position, stating his reasons. For if the pastor does not plan for the progress of his young folks in Christian endeavors, who is likely to have grasp and foresight enough to do it?

Always, moreover—and this is the highest thought in connection with such work—he should bear in mind the larger work of the church, and should be training the Endeavorers in view of it. It would be well if he even had specific posts in mind, picking out this Endeavorer and that for this and that service in the mature church, according as his abilities are disclosed and developed in the society. It is for lack of just this constructive, systematic work that some Christian Endeavor societies run down, or if they continue seem to accomplish little for the church. Christian Endeavor—let it never be forgotten—is a tool; and, like all other tools, it cannot work itself.

## CHAPTER IV

### THE PASTOR IN THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE



AM in the habit of calling the executive committee of the Christian Endeavor society the Pastor's Cabinet for his work with his young people. It deserves that name. And it deserves a chapter by itself.

For think what the Christian Endeavor executive committee is. It consists of the officers of the society and the chairmen of all the committees, together with the superintendent of the Junior society and of the Intermediate, if you have one. It is certain that the majority of these young folks will be actual leaders in the religious work among the youth of your church. At no other place is the pastor likely to come in touch with more of these leaders than in the executive-committee meetings. It is a strategical opportunity of the highest importance.

And yet I do not believe that many pastors

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make it a rule to attend the executive-committee meetings of their Christian Endeavor societies. Perhaps they feel that they are not wanted. But if they go to help, to encourage, and tactfully to guide, they will soon be held by the young people as the one indispensable member of the committee. Perhaps they feel that they have no time ; but I believe that no minister can possibly spend time in a more valuable way. Perhaps it is not the custom for the pastor to attend the committee meetings of his society. Then the sooner that custom is established, the better.

The executive-committee meeting is the place where the pastor chiefly exercises his proper function as director of the Christian Endeavor work. If I were a pastor, I should want to emphasize this relationship by appointing the meetings always at my own house. In this way, also, you could secure that regularity of time which is so essential, not only to your own convenience, but to the Christian Endeavor work itself. If it is not held at your house, it should be held at some one place always—perhaps at the house of the president.

I do not believe that the pastor should preside over the meetings of the executive committee. The society is his training-school and

## The Pastor in the Executive Committee 31

the young man whom you are training in the office of president will need that service to perfect his discipline. Nor do I believe that the pastor should speak on every question that comes up. He will know when silence is golden. He will know also when it is golden to speak.

But think of the chances a wide-awake pastor has at the meeting of his executive committee! Each chairman is to report the work of his special committee, and plans for it are to be introduced and discussed. Here will come the lookout committee, and the pastor tells of some young fellow for whose salvation he wants the Endeavorers to labor more earnestly. Here is the social committee, and the pastor commends to its neighborly offices the young people of a family he has just discovered. Here comes the prayer-meeting committee, and the pastor consults them as to ways of drawing out the Endeavorers at the church prayer meeting. Here is the music committee, and the pastor wants a Christian Endeavor choir for the Sunday-evening service. Here is the Sunday-school committee, and the pastor wants to start up a teachers' meeting. Here is the Junior superintendent, and the pastor learns of some boy who has got ready to join the church. Here is the mis-

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sionary committee, and the pastor has one of the denominational boards whose work he wants them to study at some future meeting.

And then, when good work is reported by these various chairmen, what a chance for a word of cheer from the pastor! How he may endear himself to those earnest young workers by just a sentence or two of hearty appreciation! It will be a cordial to them for the whole month of endeavor to come.

If I were a preacher, rather than miss this monthly executive-committee meeting, I would make three less calls; I would indeed.

And if the custom has been for the minister to remain away, have a frank talk with the president, show him how close a superintendency of the Christian Endeavor society by the pastor is contemplated by the constitution and plan of the movement, make plain to him that your purpose is not arbitrary interference but brotherly helpfulness, and especially that you, as the pastor of the whole church, must be in touch with all parts of the church's activity, and then, when the executive committee comes together, quietly say all this to them also, and—my word for it—you will receive a welcome to their councils that will warm the very cockles of your heart!

## CHAPTER V

### THE PASTOR IN THE SOCIALS



Of course the pastor will usually be there—always, in fact, unless the most urgent duty calls him elsewhere.

Why not there as well as in the socials of the elders? Are not the young folks far more easily won to the Kingdom than their elders? Are they not far more in need of guidance? Is there any place where the pastor can get so close to them as at their play? Is there any time when they will probably get so close to him as when he shows himself young with them, entering with joyousness into their gaiety, and sympathizing with them in their lightness of heart? Is not this a side of his young people that every pastor should see? And is there any place in which he can so easily see it in the lives of so many? Should not a pastor be able to be jolly without losing his dignity, and to play a game without injuring his influence? Nay, is a pastor likely to come into real touch

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with folks, especially with the young, if he has no fun in his make-up, or if he is afraid of showing that side of his nature?

It is time well spent, then, which the pastor spends at the young folks' social. When he cannot be there, let him always tell the society why, and show that his heart is with them, though his duties call him away. Indeed, let him bring the other older Christians now and then, and let him give a social to the Endeavorers at least once a year in the parsonage.

The Christian Endeavor social committee should plan their socials with the pastor—at least, often enough so that they will imbibe the pastor's spirit and come to have the Christian conception of amusement. If this were more frequently done, the danger of the introduction into young people's gatherings of objectionable games and sports would disappear. My ideal pastor has his eyes open all the time for bright, innocent ways of entertaining people—new, jolly games, and other forms of amusement; and the Christian Endeavor social committee will be the first beneficiary of every "find."

At the socials he will lead a game now and then, and thereby do as much good as many a time when he leads in prayer. He will be



ready at the request of the social committee to announce the victors in any contest, and present their reward with a brisk little speech. He will seek out the reserved and timid. He will draw others around them, and make them know the joys of Christian brotherhood. He will see at the social some he would not see at the prayer meetings. He will get a chance for many a little word—a word of invitation to this, of warning to that, of praise to another. Through the week he will have been inviting to the social the strangers and newcomers, and these he will seek to surround with a magic circle of friendship.

In short, as the pastor is the leader of his young people in the pulpit, he will be their leader in the social. He will lead them along ways of merriment and good cheer and unselfish thought for others. He will learn to get relaxation from this blessed work, and will find in the young people a fount of perpetual youth. He will love them more for every experience of the kind, and they will love him more; and when at the close of each evening he pronounces the benediction upon them, it will be with a deeper sense of fellowship, and with a richer joy in his ministry.

## CHAPTER VI

### THE PASTOR AND THE JUNIOR SOCIETY



THE Junior Christian Endeavor society is the nursery of the church. It is here that the best church workers of the future are to be trained. Just a turn of the wrist will put them in shape while young—only a turn of the wrist compared with the difficult processes and the complicated machinery necessary to effect the same result when they are older. If this is true, then it goes without saying that the pastor should be interested in his Junior society, and should do all he can to make it a glorious and permanent success.

Should the pastor be superintendent of the Junior society? Sometimes, if he has time, and if he has the necessary gift of winning and leading children—a gift which is more the fruit of cultivation than is likely to be thought. Yes, and one other “if”—if he can get no one else to do the work, since it is a good rule for a pastor to follow to do nothing himself

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which he can persuade any one else to do for him.

But always, whether he is superintendent or not, I hold it the pastor's business to see, in the first place, that there is a Junior society, and in the second place, that it is maintained at the highest possible level of efficiency. He should be as zealous for this as for the Sunday school or the prayer meeting or the men's league. It is quite as important as any of them. And it is his work to see to this, because he is the head of the church.

If the pastor cannot be superintendent, and if he cannot find a superintendent that can do good work, then he should know about the plan of the Junior committee. Indeed, I am inclined to prefer this plan even if an ideal superintendent could be found.

The Junior committee is a group of young people from the older Endeavor society who conduct the Junior society in co-operation. The theory of it is this: that whatever ability is discovered in the work of the older society shall be used, through the Junior committee, in training the Juniors.

The chairman of the Junior committee will be some one of good executive ability. Other members of the committee will be some one

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who knows how to manage the prayer meeting and train the Junior leaders, some one of musical skill to preside at the organ and carry on the singing, some one who is able to conduct the Bible work with enthusiasm and wisdom, some one of social talents who can superintend the Junior social committee and the Junior socials, some missionary enthusiast who will lead the Junior missionary committee to prepare Junior missionary meetings that shine, and so on, as far as you please or as the older society can furnish material.

The plan is flexible. You will not get hold of all these leaders at once. No one will remain upon the Junior committee forever. You will discover good workers in the older society; use them thus in the Junior work, and all the time be on the lookout for fresh workers to take their place in the delightful and enlarging service.

Such a Junior committee, I say, any pastor can organize that has an older Endeavor society; and work of this kind will help the older society quite as much as it helps the Juniors. Having organized it (or, if he prefers, obtained a single superintendent) the pastor will not leave the workers to their own devices, but will attend the Junior executive

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meetings and be ready with a bit of counsel for the Junior superintendent or committee. He will be on the watch continually for new and valuable ideas for Junior work, and for fresh workers that can be utilized in the Junior society. He will be on the lookout for new Juniors to introduce to the society, and in every way will keep up a vital interest in the work.

And, of course, he will often be found in the Junior meetings. The children will become familiar with him; he will be ashamed if they do not know him, and grieved indeed and dismayed if they do not love him. Sometimes he will invite the Juniors to hold a prayer meeting at his house, and will round it off with a jolly little social. Sometimes he will lead a prayer meeting himself. Often he will tell a little story at the Junior meeting, or bring some interesting object to show the Juniors, and draw a little lesson from it. He will not rest satisfied until he knows every one of the children by face and name and nature.

Especially I think the pastor can aid in winning and holding the boys. Most Junior societies are sadly lacking in the masculine element, both in the direction of them and therefore also in the membership. It is a rare

woman that can get at the heart of a boy as well as even a very inferior man. Every woman superintendent should have a man to assist her. Every Junior committee should have upon it some young man or several of them. And the active interest of the pastor in the Junior society will help to draw young men into the work, and hold them there.

Finally, there are many outreaches of this work with the dear children. Through the Juniors the pastor will be able to make an effective entrance into many families otherwise closed against his labors. He will watch the developing spiritual life of the children, and will find many a Junior from time to time that is quite ready for church-membership. In his sermons he will refer, now and then, to the Junior society, and will put into each sermon some thought and illustration that the Juniors will remember and use. Sometimes, indeed, he will have the entire Junior society sit together in the church and sing a hymn while their elders listen. Indeed, there is no end to the pleasant and profitable uses to which the pastor will put this connection with the Junior work.

Some of the happiest and most fruitful pastors I know are those that are busily en-

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gaged in directing the Junior societies of their churches. These labors have become to them a veritable fountain of youth. They get from them a thousand hints for their sermons. Their faith is quickened, and their cheerfulness brightened. And best of all, they find in the Junior society their very best field of evangelistic endeavor, for they are obeying the command of the Great Shepherd, and they are feeding His lambs.

## CHAPTER VII

### THE PASTOR IN THE UNION MEETINGS



MEAN the meetings of the Christian Endeavor union,—the national and State unions, to be sure, but chiefly, because these meetings are most numerous, the meetings of the local union, the union of the societies in a town, district, or county.

I was present not long ago at the first meeting of a Christian Endeavor union in a certain city. It started out, I thought, under especially fine auspices. But my pleasurable anticipations were decidedly dampened, and my hopes for the union met a check, when I learned that of the ten pastors of the ten societies represented in the union, only three cared enough about this first meeting to come with their young people—and two out of the three were on the programme, while another, who also was on the programme, was absent, and sent no word.

There are notable exceptions. I have at-



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tended not a few union meetings where almost every pastor in the town was present, and present in the spirit as well as in the body. But the happy circumstance is not by any means as common as it should be, and often I am forced to groan: "Oh, do the pastors know what opportunities they are missing?"

For to attend the union meetings means, usually, a little trip with the young people on the street cars or the steam cars. It gives a splendid chance to get in touch with them, to show interest in them, to learn their characters, and influence them for good.

Your presence will show that you believe in your young people, that you like them, that you want to be with them, that you are interested in their interests, that you have a heart as young as any of theirs, and are something far more and better than a theological folio on two legs.

When you attend the union meetings, you give the young folks of your church an *esprit de corps*. You furnish a rallying centre. You marshal them into one portion of the car, into one pew or block of pews. You speak for them. You, their natural leader, are in your place, leading them. They will appreciate

it. They will the more readily follow your leadership elsewhere.

And when you attend the union meetings you lead *them* also. The union officers learn that they can depend upon you. They come to you for advice. You go to them with advice or with suggestions, and they will be complimented and honored. I know from experience that our union officers are far more eager to obtain the leadership of the pastors than the pastors are to give it.

For example, there is the pastors' advisory committee—a representative committee of pastors which the United Society of Christian Endeavor urges the unions everywhere to form, in order to submit all important or difficult questions to it, and avoid making mistakes in the union work. In many places it is extremely difficult to get the pastors, especially the best equipped of them, the leaders among them, to serve on this advisory committee. In one of the largest city unions the plan had to be abandoned because of this unwillingness of the pastors to give the little time and attention necessary for the guidance of this, the one great combined work for the Master undertaken by the young Christians of their churches.

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Pastors are often sought, also, as officers for the unions, especially as presidents ; and though it is better, I think, that a young layman should take up this work for the sake of the training it gives, yet if a suitable one cannot be found, and if the young people turn to one of the pastors, I believe that their appeal is seconded by the voice of God.

“Attending the union meeting requires too much time,” many pastors say ; “my time is all taken up with my church work.” But this *is* your church work. It is certainly part of the pastor’s duty to follow his young people into all their important undertakings for the Master, especially a great self-impelled undertaking like this Christian Endeavor union work.

“But the meetings are not worth attending,” it is sometimes urged. Well, why not make them worth attending ? The pastors are members of the Christian Endeavor union—by virtue of their office they are the *chief* members. The young people need the aid of their pastors in planning bright and helpful meetings, and they should have that aid. They will gladly avail themselves of it, if the pastors show themselves interested in the work of the union by frequent attendance on its meetings.

I sometimes hear complaints that the opposite is the case, and that the union officers will not heed the advice and remonstrances of the pastors ; but always I find that when such clashes occur, the pastors have not put themselves in sympathetic touch with the union work, but have held aloof and imposed restrictions and presented criticisms from the outside. In a large number of the union meetings I attend, the pastor of the church has not even complimented the Endeavorers and their speaker by his presence, and sometimes when his presence is insured by that frigid device, an "address of welcome," he has quietly slipped out as soon as his cordial welcome has been delivered.

Of course the majority of pastors do not do this, but greet the speaker and the young people as they come, have a hearty handshake and a jolly word for everybody, and make everybody feel at home, setting to their own young people the example of sociability. But the exceptions to this rule are sadly common.

Before the meeting, during the meeting, and after the meeting the help of the pastor is essential. The meeting will be a failure, very likely, unless it is announced heartily and fully from the various pulpits. If pastors only knew

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how much their young people appreciate such advertisements, they would give them more often and more cordially. "Our pastor gave the meeting *such* a good notice!" is the delighted exclamation I have heard from many an enthusiastic worker, talking with me at a union meeting.

And then during the meeting there are many opportunities for the pastor to put in a word, facilitating whatever business may come up, helping out the discussions, the "open parliaments," and the like, leading the applause, interjecting a hearty "Amen" or other token of approval, and radiating the contagion of good nature and a cheery Christianity.

And also after the meeting it is the pastors to whom the speakers naturally turn for some expression that will make them feel that their free expenditure of time and thought has not been wasted, that the sacrifices many of them make in coming to address the union have not been thrown away. Sometimes the pastor proposes a vote of thanks. Sometimes he speaks a few words of warm appreciation. Sometimes a hearty hand-clasp and a "God bless you, brother," tell the whole story. But both speakers and audience go away with the feeling that the meeting has been a great suc-

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cess, and that they want to go to the next one.

It is an indication of the attitude of the young folks toward their pastors that by far the larger number of speakers upon all their union programmes are ministers. When a call to perform such a service comes to a pastor, it is a blessed opportunity. Why is it that so many pastors improve the occasion by talking about "the dangers of the Christian Endeavor movement"? Why is it that so many others give these eager young souls, facing with fresh hearts the great untried future, merely a miscellany of jokes and funny stories, as if they distrusted their capacity for serious and earnest thought? Why is it that so many others draw out from a dusty drawer some long-forgotten sermon? Young people—the ordinary young people—do not need to be warned of the dangers attending the Christian Endeavor movement. If such perils exist, warn the officials of the United Society of Christian Endeavor, or the denominational gatherings, but do not quench the ardor of these young Christians as they gather for fresh enthusiasm and help by doleful prophecies of ruin to the cause which has honestly written upon its banner, "For Christ and the Church." If the funny stories

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come bubbling up, rigorously subordinate them to some great lesson that will sink deep into the hearts of the Endeavorers. And as for the old sermon, never preach it, to young or old, until it has become to you a new sermon that cannot help being preached because it pulses with the life of to-day.

The address to which Christian Endeavorers listen with the greatest eagerness is always a talk that will help them to do in a better way the practical Christian work in which they are engaged. I have proved this statement many times in many ways. They have promised to pray every day, and they want something that will make prayer more vital to them. They have promised to read the Bible every day, and they want something that will explain the Bible and magnify it in their lives. They have promised to support the church in every way, and they want to be told about the church, its glories, its beauties, its triumphs. They have promised to take part in every Christian Endeavor prayer meeting, and they want something that will fill their souls with the spirit of witness-bearing. They have promised to be faithful to all their Christian Endeavor duties, and whatever brings new zest and practical direction for their committee work wins their

cordial welcome. They have bound themselves to the monthly consecration meetings, and they want something to deepen within them the spirit of consecration, and render them more faithful to their vows. These are the themes they prefer, and it is along these lines that our pastors can help them most when out of their mature experience and fuller Christian knowledge they address them at their union meetings.

I must pass with a word the work of the pastor as delegate. Often he is commissioned by his Endeavor society to attend some distant gathering, where they pay his expenses of travel and entertainment. This is a blessed experience, both for pastor and young folks. Such delegates are quite sure to be a power at our conventions, and a power in reporting the conventions after they return home.

I must also pass with only a word the opportunity which these union meetings give to the pastors to meet and listen to one another, and become familiar with what the other churches and denominations are thinking and doing. This is a matchless gain from the Christian Endeavor union meetings. In most communities—more shame to our split-up Protestantism!—the union Endeavor meetings are the



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only opportunities for this fellowship and mutual knowledge which the pastors and their churches enjoy. What it means for the progress of the Kingdom in massive and effective power the coming years will tell; and it will be a noble story.

Indeed, the climax of my argument for the pastors' participation in Christian Endeavor union work rests here. This union work is a vital part of every pastor's church work, because no church lives—or should live—to itself. It is one of the organs of the body of Christ, and it must work for the other organs and in harmony with them. The eye must know the arm, and the mouth must know the foot. *Dissecta membra* are we indeed, mere scattered fragments of Christianity, if this is not the case. For this Christ prayed when He prayed "that they all might be one." To help realize this ideal of a confederate Christendom is the hope of Christian Endeavor—a hope that can be realized only as it becomes also the hope and the eager desire of the Christian Endeavor pastors.

## CHAPTER VIII

### THE PASTOR AS UTILIZER



THE best thing a pastor can do for his Christian Endeavor society is to use it.

Of all young Christians it may safely be said that they are glad to be set at work.

They are not very good at setting themselves at work—it needs an experienced worker for that ; but they are good at following a leader.

Few parts of a pastor's work are so important as this of setting others at work, old folks as well as young. Especially is this true of work among the young, because here the pastor is to be a Columbus ; he is to discover abilities, he is to win for Christ new continents of human willingness and skill. And he cannot do this without trying the young people at different kinds of work.

This is not an easy thing to do. It is far easier for the pastor to carry out his natural bent, and study and write and talk according to his pleasure, than to devise all sorts of

ways of finding out other folks' natural bents, that he may utilize them for the advancement of the Kingdom. It is always easier just to lead and develop one's self than to lead and develop others. That is why the leaders in any calling are better paid than those they lead. That is why, among other reasons, the pastor has more honor than his parishioners—because he is able to lead, to direct, to discover, to draw out and build up.

It is a good plan, therefore, for the pastor never to do anything himself that he can get any one of his church to do for him. There are exceptions to all rules, but there are few exceptions to this. It is no rule of laziness, but one of hard work. Often, very likely, the pastor will be far too busy to take time to get folks to do anything for him!

But when the pastor has time for this fruitful work with his Endeavorers, what shall he set them to doing? Of course the precise answer to this question depends upon local conditions, the ability of the Endeavorers, and what is already being done by their elders. I can name here only a few of the many ways in which pastors, to my knowledge, have utilized their Endeavorers, that these may serve as stimulating examples.

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They may be set to cleaning and mending the hymn-books, if they are out of order. They may be organized for a canvass of the congregation for the denominational papers and the missionary magazines. They may divide among themselves the entire town, watching for strangers, both visitors and new inhabitants, and they will report them to the pastor that he may call upon them. In the same way they may report those that are sick. They may visit the hotels on Saturday evenings, and leave written or printed invitations for the church services on the morrow, one to be put in each of the guests' boxes, or left at their rooms, or laid at their place at the tables.

They would enjoy beautifying the church-yard, setting out flowering shrubs, making and caring for flower-beds, cutting the grass, raking the leaves, weeding the walks. If any member of the society has a printing-press, or if the society as a whole will raise the money for one, it might be made of the greatest service, printing all kinds of church announcements. They might even print a church paper. If you have a church paper printed elsewhere, they may become advertising and subscription agents, they may address the copies and mail or distribute them, they may edit a Christian

Endeavor department in it, or perhaps they may even manage the entire editorship under your direction.

Very often I hear of Endeavor societies that have done much in the way of adorning the church, and adding to its comfort and convenience. Now it is a new carpet that they put in, now new chandeliers or electric lights, or a lovely stained glass window, or a handsome pulpit, or a pulpit Bible, or fresh cushions for the pews, or frescos for the walls, or a coat of paint for the outside. Almost everything that can be done for a church is reported as done over and over by our Endeavor societies.

Natural talents may be utilized. Here is a young stenographer who will be glad to give the pastor an evening once a week with the shorthand and the typewriter, and this will be a great help in his correspondence. Here is another who writes a good hand, and will be glad to direct envelopes for him when he has to send out circulars. A third is skilful in lettering, and will prepare artistic and striking notices of special services to be posted around the town. Still another is a young newspaper reporter, and he will be proud to be entrusted with the task of seeing that the papers insert

proper notices of all important church happenings and plans.

Many societies have been utilized for outdoor evangelistic meetings, not only in the singing, but also in the testimony. Some societies hold a song service in front of the church just before the evening meeting, so as to draw in passers-by. Some societies engage in the relief work of the church, learning who are in need, and carrying to them the church's gifts. Some Endeavorers have taken care of the literature table of the church—to which all bring what papers and magazines they are through with, and take from the table in turn whatever they would like to read, the remainder being sent occasionally to hospitals and other places where it can be used to good advantage. Or, if there is no such literature table, the Endeavorers have been most useful in gathering up, systematically, the used periodicals and books of the church, shipping them to places of need.

More than once I have heard of Endeavorers who have made collections of bright and helpful extracts from the pastor's sermons, which were afterwards printed for circulation among the congregation, sometimes for private sale. When there is need of money for special

church expenses, the Endeavorers make good canvassers. The pastor will find them useful in gathering anecdotes and illustrations for him, and this service will make them more eager listeners to his sermons. They may be set to running errands of all kinds, taking messages, packing missionary barrels, obtaining pictures for the Sunday-school or prayer-meeting room, or book-racks for the church pews. Many societies have among their regular appointments a "Pastor's Aid Committee," whose members are placed at his service, and whose entire time for committee work is to be spent in helping him in little ways which he will name.

In all this it is best to keep the Christian Endeavor work separate from that of the older church-members. Young people like to have a definite task of their own, something in which they can take distinct pride and point to as a Christian Endeavor achievement. In this they are not so very different from their elders. So if there is a new church to be built, let them have a Christian Endeavor window to put in, or a Christian Endeavor gallery, or something of the sort. And if there are new hymn-books to be bought, let the society raise all the money, so that they

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may have the happy sense of accomplishment.

It is well for the pastor to go to the society frankly with a list of things he wants done, and ask them to do those things. Have them appoint new committees to do them, or divide them among the committees already existing. The young folks will appreciate this directness, and will take it as an evidence that the pastor trusts them and is depending upon them.

After all, however, the climax of this Columbus work on the part of the pastor, the proud and happy completion of his labors as a utilizer, is when the young people themselves begin to originate and suggest, when they begin to see openings for new enterprises, when they begin to lead themselves into fresh fields of Christian Endeavor.

Then the pastor will know that he has not labored in vain, he has developed something, he has trained a new set of workers ready in their turn to stimulate and direct others. Then is the time, probably, when they should graduate from the Christian Endeavor society and take their place at once among the trained forces of the church.



## CHAPTER IX

### THE PASTOR AS PRAISER



DO not think that pastors in general begin to realize the tremendous power of praise. Nothing is equal to it, if you would gain a worthy influence over your young people. In looking back over my life, I can see that my most effective stimulus toward whatever good I have been able to accomplish has always been some one's praise; it has never been any one's warning or admonition, though I have had both in abundance. Doubtless every one of my readers can duplicate this observation.

Fault-finding is sometimes necessary, but it is never wise to find fault with young people—or their elders, for that matter, but I am writing now in regard to the young—until you have praised them enough to show that your heart is with them and that you love to recognize their excellencies. Blame can always safely wait for such an accumulation of praise.

Indeed, the best corrective of error is always to praise the opposite excellence. If your Endeavorers have fallen into the habit of tardiness, wait till they do begin a meeting on time—bring that happening to pass yourself, if need be—and then praise them so magnificently for it that they will fall in love with promptness!

Do not wait for perfection, or even an approximation to it, before you will praise. Praise the beginnings; then is when praise is most needed. Praise the little things, or they will never grow to great things. Praise the stammering testimony at the meeting, the mediocre committee work, the president that is only so-so.

But that is not being judicial? Who made you a judge over any one? Shun “judiciousness” as if it were poison. I know some provoking persons who think they are not doing their duty unless, with every glass of sweet appreciation, they mingle a big dose of the wormwood of blame. Let your praise be unembittered by fault-finding. Even postpone advice to another time. Do not dilute your cup of cheer till it becomes tasteless and insipid.

You can almost always praise, and praise

honestly, if you put yourself in the place of others, and try to understand their difficulties. You may never have had the fearful wrestling with timidity and awkwardness and mental emptiness which that young Endeavorer knows all about—the one, I mean, who seemingly cannot get beyond the mere reading of a sentence or two in the prayer meeting. But try to imagine how he feels, and by your comprehending sympathy lead him out, if you can, into that fine unconsciousness of self and all-absorbing desire to help others which really constitute the liberty of the children of God. It is sympathy that gives one material for praise.

Praise for definite things, for you want definite results. I know persons who are always conscientiously careful to mingle praise with their fault-finding; but their praise is always in vague, general terms that do not stick, while their fault-finding is always terribly pointed and goes right in. If you want better singing from your Endeavorers, miss no opportunity to praise their singing when praise is at all admissible. If your leaders take up too much time in opening the meeting, do not scold the society for it, but bide your time till a leader gives you a brisk and brief beginning, and then commend it with all your adjectives!

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Make your praise personal. Some folks' praise goes out on the boundless ether like an echo from the cliff of Nowhere. Make the Endeavorer feel that he has put you under a personal obligation. And at the same time tell him how glad you think God must be, too.

Much, therefore, depends upon the way in which praise is spoken. It may be cordial as to the words; but if the eye is cold and the voice impassive, the most cordial words receive an enormous discount. Just a word of praise, pressed home by a kindly eye and a hearty, earnest voice, will go farther than ten minutes of eulogy that has no *you* in it.

There are some Endeavorers whom it is especially necessary to praise. There is the young prayer-meeting leader. He is quite sure to feel that he has made a mess of it. Every pause has gone straight to his heart. He forgot some important thought that he meant to express. He was half scared to death. Perhaps he broke down altogether. The failure to hearten him up a bit may cost you a fine church-worker in the years to come.

Then there is the beginner in the prayer meeting, and there are the faithful committee workers, much of whose work is anonymous, and there is the president with his burdens

so heavy for his strength, and there is the young girl who has just sung her first solo—there are as many different persons to praise as there are members of your society! And no one's praise means so much as their pastor's.

Praise them in a passing whiff popped into their ear: "Capital thought you gave us to-night, Tom!" "I see your lookout committee means business, Nelly!" It has cost you a breath; it may win for the church a life.

Sometimes take the trouble to praise them by letter. Let me see. Four sentences would do it, or even less, at a pinch. Just a morsel of appreciation of the meeting he led, or the committee report she gave, or the social she conducted, or the fine quotation he read at the last meeting. An envelope to address—half a minute. A two-cent stamp. That's all. Five minutes, at the outside; and the busiest pastor has bound to him some young heart forever—to him and to Christ.

Yes, and public praise, too. Praise of Tom to Dick, and of Dick to Harry, well knowing that all three bits of approval will in time reach their owners and be doubly valued because they were behind the back, just as censure that thus reaches one is doubly painful. Praise to the father and mother—which will

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do them good as well as their child. Praise in print—in the church paper, and the town paper, and the denominational paper. Praise before the society, at the prayer meeting and the business meeting. Praise before the church, all of whose membership should be lifting their young folks in the strong arms of their love and sympathy. And then you will set others to praising, which is sometimes even better than praising yourself. Not always praise of individuals, of course, but often praise of the meetings as a whole, of the society as a whole, of the Christian Endeavor movement as a whole. That is because you want to teach your young folks to look at things in the large.

A scolding pastor tears down with his tongue all that he builds with his hands. A praising pastor finds in his commendation the best of mortar for the temple he is erecting. "Dangerous tendencies" and other malevolent hypotheses seldom really need to be pointed out. Correct what is wrong, and you will have no trouble with what may become wrong. Deal in positives with sufficient zeal, and you will have little opportunity to deal in negatives.

This life of praise that I have been urging is especially hard for some natures. Long years of practice are sometimes required be-

fore it becomes a happy instinct. Always, to be wisely done, praise must be planned for.

But it is well worth planning for, since it is the easiest, most pleasant, and most Christlike way of influencing other lives.

## CHAPTER X

### THE PASTOR AT THE BRAKES



It is sometimes necessary for the pastor to use the brakes upon his Christian Endeavor society. It is important that he should know when it should be done. It is quite as important that he should know when it should not be done. It is even more important that he should know just how to do it.

The pastor has the right to use the brakes in his Endeavor society. His authority is expressly recognized in the constitution of his society; or if it is not, it should be. If the constitution of the local society has been changed in this particular from the Model Constitution suggested by the United Society, it should be changed back again. Whatever authority the pastor can properly and wisely exercise over any branch of the church work, as, for instance, over the Sunday school or the Ladies' Aid Society, he may properly and wisely exercise over the Christian Endeavorers.



He should exercise this authority as a matter of course. He should not stop to prove that he has the authority; that is to admit that there may be doubt about it. He should simply use the authority that he has.

But it is seldom indeed that it is really necessary for the pastor to put on the brakes. Most necessities of the kind would never occur if the pastor looked far enough into the future to remove the causes of trouble before they grew into difficulties at all. Teach the Endeavorers to put the larger interests of the church before the less important interests of their society. This is to be done chiefly by insisting all the time that the Christian Endeavor society shall be what it was intended to be,—merely the training-school for the church, merely the stepping-stone toward full church activity, and never an end in itself. Get the older church-members, and especially the church officers, to visit the Endeavor society frequently, and learn what work is actually carried on there. On the other hand, advance the Endeavorers as rapidly as possible into positions of usefulness and responsibility in the church. Working in this way, both upward and downward, you will remove all likeli-

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hood of misunderstanding and occasions for dispute.

There are certain matters in which the society should never move without the pastor's consent. They should never ask a speaker to address them, without getting his approval of the man. When calls for contributions to this cause or another come to them, they should always submit them to the pastor, that he may judge whether they are worthy to interfere with the important calls from the denominational boards. No important change should be made in the constitution without his favorable verdict. No member should be dropped from the roll without his advice, and generally no member should be added, and no member transferred from the associate to the active list, until he has passed upon it as wise. If quarrels arise in the society, as, alas! they sometimes will even among Endeavorers, they should be taken to him for settlement. No change should be made in the regular time of Endeavor meetings and socials without consultation with him to see whether the change would interfere with any other church meetings, and whether, on the whole, he deems it wise. These are the points that occur to me as being most likely to cause trouble, and

as being most suitably controlled by the pastor.

All the important plans of the society, however, should be laid before him before they are determined upon. This is not to put the society into fetters, but to establish the familiar, chummy relation that ought to exist between these young workers and the head worker of the church. They should run to him with their new designs as naturally and instinctively as children run to father or mother with their plans. Sympathy is the real basis of authority, and if the relation of sympathetic brotherhood is once established between pastor and young people, the alliance in labors that I have described is none too close, nor will it in the least chafe.

It should further be said that the pastor's authority should rarely be exercised openly, but generally through the Christian Endeavor officers, the president, the executive committee, or the lookout committee. It is the lookout committee, for example, that drops unfaithful members, and it is not the pastor. Few know that it must always be with the pastor's approval. It is the executive committee that has passed upon some unfit application for a contribution, and rejected it. Few know that

it was rejected because of reasons given by the pastor. It is the president that quietly gives the facts that render it decidedly unwise to invite a certain man to address the society, and few know that he got those facts from the pastor. The pastor is the power, and, so far as possible, he is the power behind the throne.

It is useful for the pastor to remember that generally the best way to correct a fault is to build up the opposite virtue. Cliques are working mischief among the young folks? Get the social committee to hold district socials that will include every one in a certain geographical stretch. There is too little thought of the church? Form a class in which the Endeavorers will study denominational history. They are careless about the church prayer meeting? Get the prayer-meeting committee to arrange that a certain section of the society will take some part, each week, in the church prayer meeting. This is working by indirection? No; it is the straightforward driving away of a bad thing by pushing it before a good thing.

Distinguish between essentials and non-essentials; it is not so necessary to remove a freckle as a cancer. Love young people, and let them know that you love them. Be patient

with them, and remember when you were young. And if you have this feeling toward them, you may put on the brakes when you please; indeed, you may do anything with them, and they will love you and do your will.

## CHAPTER XI

### THE PASTOR AND THE PLEDGE



THE Christian Endeavor pledge consists of three sentences. Those three sentences have gone around the globe. They have been translated into all the important languages and many smaller ones. They have profoundly influenced the lives of many millions. They have made hundreds of ministers and missionaries and an uncounted host of outspoken, active disciples. They have done all this in the short time since 1881, and they are to-day upon more lips and in more hearts than ever before. Outside of Sacred Writ, I know of no other document three sentences long in all the world's history that has produced equal results.

When we look at these three sentences we find no attempt at rhetoric, nothing but the plain, straightforward statement of Christian privileges and duties; these simple words:—

“Trusting in the Lord Jesus Christ for strength, I promise Him that I will strive to

do whatever He would like to have me do; that I will make it the rule of my life to pray and to read the Bible every day, and to support my own church in every way, especially by attending all her regular Sunday and mid-week services, unless prevented by some reason which I can conscientiously give to my Saviour; and that, just so far as I know how, throughout my whole life, I will endeavor to lead a Christian life.

“As an active member, I promise to be true to all my duties, to be present at, and to take some part, aside from singing, in every Christian Endeavor prayer meeting, unless hindered by some reason which I can conscientiously give to my Lord and Master. If obliged to be absent from the monthly consecration meeting of the society, I will, if possible, send at least a verse of Scripture to be read in response to my name at the roll-call.”

What are promised here? Eight things:—

1. An attempt to do Christ's entire will.
2. Daily prayer as the rule of life.
3. Daily Bible-reading as the rule of life.
4. All-around support of the church.
5. Conscientious attendance upon church services.
6. Duty-doing in the young people's society.

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7. Conscientious participation in the young people's prayer meeting.

8. Special remembrance of the monthly consecration meeting.

It should be noted that all these promises are so qualified as to bring them within easy accomplishment. The Endeavorer does not promise to do whatever Christ would have him do, but he promises to *strive* toward that end. He does not promise to pray and read the Bible daily, but to make daily prayer and Bible-reading *the rule of his life*. He does not promise that all his acts shall be Christian, but that they shall be, *so far as he knows how*. He does not promise to take part in every prayer meeting, but to do so *unless he has a reason that he thinks Christ would accept*. In short, there is in the Christian Endeavor pledge no monkish insistence upon minutiae, no flagellation of tender consciences, but a broad acceptance of the quite universally acknowledged primary duties,—Bible-reading, prayer, church-support, testimony, service, obedience,—all in whatever measure, and at whatever times, a quickened conscience indicates as the desire of Christ.

It would be hard to see what should be dropped from this schedule, though much



might be added to it. I, for instance, would like to incorporate in it a specific recognition of Christian stewardship, Christian citizenship, and Christian fellowship. But if one is to make any definite promise at all with regard to the Christian life, could it include less than this? Shall we drop the requirements of food-supply,—the daily prayer and Bible-reading as a rule of life? Shall we drop the requirements of association and activity, church-attendance, church-support, outward confession of Christ as Christ gives place and opportunity? Those that are responsible for Christian Endeavor standards believe that they have here an irreducible minimum for the training of young Christians.

But the trustees of the United Society of Christian Endeavor, while they are sure they are carrying out the will of the vast majority of pastors in holding up this standard before the young people, yet from the beginning have recognized the right of private judgment. Every copy of the so-called "Model Constitution" that has gone out has stated explicitly that whatever it contains is only a set of suggestions, to be modified wherever desired so as to adapt it to local needs and individual ideas. The trustees have repeatedly, in formal, ex-

plicit, and widely published resolutions, directed attention to this point, and especially to the privilege of any pastor to re-write the pledge completely, if he choose, for his own society.

Thus no sacredness is attached to the words of the pledge. Indeed, during the early years of the movement it consisted of only a single sentence,—a portion of the first sentence as it stands at present. It was in response to the earnest desire of the pastors themselves that there were added the references to the church and its services, and all the latter half of the pledge referring to the Christian Endeavor prayer meeting. In British countries the pledge is greatly changed in form and somewhat changed in contents. There is nothing to prevent any pastor from writing an altogether new pledge for his society. The society would be in precisely as good standing as a Christian Endeavor society as before. If his pledge proved to be a real improvement, and were adopted by the majority, it in turn would become the recognized standard. Such attempts have been made. When brought to the notice of the editors of *The Christian Endeavor World*, they have been published fairly. Thus far, however, no pledge, so far as we

know, with the exception of the two forms set forth at different times by Dr. Clark and the United Society, has succeeded in winning the favor of more than a single pastor—its author.

“But suppose,” it is asked, “a pastor does not wish his young people to take any form of pledge at all, however slight,—not even the pledge to try to do the will of Christ? Would such a society, absolutely without a pledge, be received into the Christian Endeavor ranks?”

The answer, so far as the official action of the trustees of the United Society has gone, is No. These scores of experienced pastors, from every State and denomination, have thus far considered the mandate of the pastors to be, “Hold up the standard of the pledge.” They believe that the vast body of ministers and other Christian workers consider some kind of pledge an essential for a strong, self-perpetuating young people’s religious society. They believe that these pastors wish to be reinforced by the urging of the United Society in their own insistence upon a pledge. If at any time the trustees saw any marked tendency to a preference for *no* pledge, they would carefully investigate the matter, and give room for such a preference. Thus far, however, it is a simple fact that the pastors that do not see the wis-

dom of some sort of pledge, covenant, or agreement, to serve as a basis and rallying point for their work with young people, are so few as to be a neglected factor so far as official utterances are concerned, though peculiar and temporary local circumstances have sometimes led the general secretary to register a society even when it had no pledge.

The point that should be everywhere understood is this: There is absolutely no disposition to force all Christian Endeavor societies into one mold, or impose upon any pastor a single method of work he deems unwise or even inexpedient. The central Christian Endeavor authorities are not "authorities" in the ordinary meaning of the term; they merely register the experience and desire of the churches. They could not do more than this if they would; they would not if they could. In this matter of the pledge, as in all other matters of form and method, their sole duty is to discover what has been found to work best, publish it as widely as possible, and hold it up as a standard—until something better has been devised; then, to substitute *it*, and hold it up as a standard. Thus the Christian Endeavor Society does not stand or fall by any form or method whatever, and would continue un-

moved though every method now approved by the pastors should come to be rejected and replaced by a different one.

“But,” it is sometimes said, “the young people do not keep the pledge; is it not harming them, is it not weakening their sense of the sacredness of truth, to allow them to repeat a pledge they do not observe?”

It certainly is; there is no doubt of it. But so also is it harmful when older Christians are false to their church vows, as they so often are. Shall we therefore abolish church covenants?

The Christian Endeavor society is intended to be a training-school in the matter of honesty, of the fulfilment of obligations. Scarcely could it do a better service to church and society, in these lax days, than by such a training in promise-keeping. The solemn vows of marriage, the sacred oath of office, the promises of debtors, the obligations of citizenship,—at a time when these rest so lightly upon men’s consciences, to the fearful peril of society, what more useful work than to lead our young people to take a simple pledge and then learn to live up to it? It will become a model for the multitudinous pledges they will be obliged to assume in mature life, and if we can train them in strict observance of that one agreement,

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they will have learned once for all to be honest.

Take that matter about which there is so much complaint, the fact that now and then the young people, who have promised to attend all the regular church services (except when Christ wishes their service elsewhere), walk away after their own prayer meeting on Sunday evening, and leave the Sunday evening church service that follows with a meagre attendance. It is idle to inquire whether this is common or not, though I have gathered statistics that prove it to be not by any means the rule. If it occurred in only one church it would illustrate the same point as if it occurred in ten thousand churches. It is also idle to say (what I have proved to be true) that the Christian Endeavorers attend these evening church services much more faithfully than the older members of the church. That is to the discredit of the older members, but it is not an offset to a single case of unfaithfulness on the part of the young people. For here is an explicit promise to attend all the regular church services. And here is a single society, the majority of whose members are plainly false to that vow. What is to be done about it?

Well, as already said, the pastor may rewrite the pledge, and leave that promise out. He may do that on several grounds. He may think that the young people have had enough religious services without the added meeting. He may prefer that they attend and take part in their prayer meeting rather than hear the evening sermon, in case they cannot do both. He may be satisfied that they get more good from the former than the latter. He may even fail to see the need of a second sermon on Sunday, and may keep it up only in deference to a custom, or the desire of a few. For any or all of these reasons, he may wish that clause stricken from the Christian Endeavor pledge.

But—and this is the main point—he will *not* wish it omitted merely because it is disregarded. If he is convinced that it is the young folks's duty to attend the evening service, because of the good they will get, or the good they will do, or both, then certainly he will not be willing that they should not do that duty; then certainly he dare not acquiesce in their failure to do that duty. They have recognized it formally; they have subscribed to it; what a handle does this give him! Such a promise is an advantage not lightly to

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be cast aside, a leverage to be grasped and used. He must hold the Endeavorers to that vow, rather than relax it or annul it. If it is their duty to attend the evening church service, it would be no less a duty though the entire Christian Endeavor society were annihilated. In that case it would merely be a duty unconfessed. If the unfaithful members should be dropped from the society, this would still be their duty just as much as before, and you would have lost the hold upon them given you by their pledge.

No; the pledge and the society create no obligations, but they afford the pastor unexampled means of enforcing certain obligations that are binding on all Christians. He can go to the president of the society and direct attention to the defect. He can go before the executive committee, and urge their vigorous action. He can set to work the lookout committee, charged with the enforcing of the pledge. He can appeal to the society as a whole, or to individual Endeavorers. He can show them the reasonableness of the duty. He can remind them that they have recognized it, and given their vow to Christ. He can tell them that now it has become simply a matter of honesty—or dishonesty. He can persist,



working now in one way and now in another, using now one and now another of the many tools the society gives him, until, in love of the dear young people and of his Christ, he has won them to that duty. It may not be easy ; no one has ever asserted that the actual training of young Christians is easy ; but it will be a bit of training, and the quiet dropping of that clause of the pledge would be mere shirking.

So one might talk about another promise included in the pledge,—the taking part in the Christian Endeavor prayer meeting, unless the Endeavorer has a reason for silence that he thinks Christ would accept. I have known pastors to deride this as a contrivance for mere “talky-talky,” as exalting glibness of speech and empty phrases. “Speaking in meeting!” they exclaim ; “what we want is *service ; doing* things, and not this everlasting speechifying.”

Now there is no doubt that the Christian Endeavor pledge does hold up regular participation in prayer meeting as the ideal for a Christian. Our societies provide abundantly also for service, for doing things. They have an elaborate system of committee work, that sets the Endeavorers to active service far

exceeding, in variety and amount, what the average older church-member ever thinks of doing. But along with this the pledge does certainly imply that there will be regular vocal expression of Christian purpose, praise, experience, and desire. It does not say how, or how much; it leaves that to individual hearts and consciences, the varying needs of life and the impulses of the Holy Ghost. It provides for any time when for any good reason silence may seem to the Endeavorer the best fulfilment of Christ's will. But its undoubted implication is that speech will be the rule and silence the exception. It is rightly understood by the young people to be a promise of regularity in Christian testimony.

If, therefore, the pastor sees, as pastors often see, that the Endeavorers are taking this vow carelessly and observing it loosely; if he is sure that the majority of the failures to take part in the meeting are not supported by reasons which Christ would approve, here again only two courses are open to him.

If he believes that testimony—brief, modest, sincere testimony, often only by means of a Scripture verse repeated or read or the utterance of a sentence in prayer—is not required of Christians as a regular thing; if he believes

that only the exceptional Christian should speak for Christ before his fellows ; if he believes, therefore, that it is a mistake to try to train the young to testimony, to public prayer, to the "edifying" of one another, and that the attempt results only in rearing on the one hand a set of prigs and on the other a set of shirks, then his course is plain : he must drop that clause of the pledge, he must go back to the original form of the pledge or to some other pledge of his own devising.

But if he recognizes the need of outspoken Christianity, if he sees clearly that all Christians are to be soul-winners and not the ministers alone, if he holds that the prayer meeting is not the place for oratory or show but for the ordinary thoughts of ordinary men on the greatest themes, and if he understands that the best and almost the only time to train men to speak for Christ is when they are young,—then he will not think of abolishing this requirement of the pledge just because the members are false to it. Rather, he will hold to it the more tenaciously, and use it the more earnestly as a lever of conscience toward the right. He will see in these stammering, halting, timid, blundering young people the best hope he has of a coming church in which song and prayer,

testimony and exhortation, from pew as well as pulpit, will arouse, convince, and convert, will comfort and strengthen and inspire. He will recognize his opportunity to train the Timothys and Tituses of the future, and the more humble Rhodas, Lydias, and Corneliuses. He will be grateful for the start given him in their signature of the pledge, though it is no more than that, and he will press on, as the God-appointed leader of the young people, until he has taught them to use for Christ the mighty power of human speech.

And so one might talk about the consecration meeting. It is easy to see the failures of the plan, the spiritless roll-call, the hackneyed and meaningless responses, the *no*-responses so carelessly glossed over. All this is the exception and not the rule, but it is common enough, and may be the rule in your church.

Here again it is, Abolish, or Vivify. If you are convinced that the consecration meeting is wrong in principle and harmful or stupid in practice, no one is holding you to it. In dropping it you break no law of the Medes and Persians, nor do you fall out of the Christian Endeavor ranks. It is retained in the model pledge because the vast majority of Christian Endeavor pastors believe in it; but that is no

reason why you should retain it, if you do not believe in it.

If, however, you realize the necessity of some regular reminder of duty, some review of promises, some recurring occasion when the Endeavorers will look over the past for evidences of weakness and forward to the future with purposes of strength and achievement, your course is not to abolish the consecration meeting because it is poorly observed, but to reinforce it until it accomplishes for your young people what it is designed to accomplish. It may be held too often; then hold it less frequently. You may prefer another name; then rechristen it. You may dislike the roll-call; then adopt others of the scores of cognate plans set forth in the publications of the United Society. But if you see in the method a chance for great good, if you acknowledge that it represents what is, in some form or other, an essential of the Christian life, then rejoice that your young people have given formal assent to the principle, and upon that vantage ground build your training in persistence and continuity of devotion.

Thus I might take up, were it necessary, each clause of the pledge. Nothing is obliga-

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tory. Nothing *ought* to be retained by a pastor who, after study and experience, disbelieves in it. Every point is urged and recommended by the trustees of the United Society; but only as embodying what, in their judgment, is the best method, for usual conditions, yet discovered. And each part of the pledge should be held with zeal by all pastors that believe it represents a duty in which young Christians ought to be trained.

Still one matter remains to be discussed. Some pastors have wished to lessen decidedly the requirements for admission to the Christian Endeavor society, for fear of dividing their young people. Here are some boys, good-hearted, well-meaning, but the prayer meeting does not appeal to them. What they like is a boys' club, with camps and drills and zoological collections. Why not do away with the pledge, and make of the Christian Endeavor society a club, with a prayer meeting for those who like "that sort of thing"? Here are some girls, lively, thoughtless, but also well-meaning. They do not "take to" the prayer meeting, but they would enjoy a sewing circle, to make little garments for the children of the poor. Why not drop the pledge, and make the Christian Endeavor society another ver-

sion of the King's Daughters? Suggestions such as these are frequently made.

The answer is, of course, Try it. No one hinders you. But do not expect, whatever you do, to get rid of divisions, or gather all young people into any religious organization. Why not be consistent, and do away with church covenants, letting any one join the church that wants to, and do anything he pleases after he joins? All church-membership creates a division. You leave outside any number of good-hearted, well-meaning folks. All organizations with definite purposes,—temperance societies, missionary societies, Sunday schools, "ladies' aid" societies,—separate Christians into those that are working with them and those that are not. The result is inevitable, however we may desire to get all the church into the Sunday school, or the missionary society. But we still keep up our Sunday schools, and we study only the Bible therein, however much we might enlarge them by dropping the Bible and inserting courses in Hans Christian Andersen and Marie Corelli. For the same reason the pastors will probably continue to support the Christian Endeavor pledge substantially as it is, because it includes just about the essentials of Christian training,

however much they might enlarge the societies by dropping those essentials and substituting popular amusements.

For that is the nub of the whole matter, and the ground that all Christian Endeavor advocates hold with reference to the pledge: If it contains non-essentials, they may be removed, and should be; if it does not contain all essentials, those lacking may be inserted, and should be; if it is agreed to in substance but the form is disliked, the form may be changed, and should be; and if on the whole the pastor believes in it but sees it disregarded by the young people, it should not be abolished, for that would not diminish by one iota either their duty or his responsibility—it would only lessen his hold upon their consciences. For though “better it is that thou shouldest not vow, than that thou shouldest vow and not pay,” best of all, in regard to any religious duty, is it to vow—*and to pay*.



## CHAPTER XII

### THE PASTOR AND THE SOCIETY AT LARGE



CHRISTIAN ENDEAVOR desires to be, and should be, the one universally adopted society for the religious training of young people, as the Sunday school is the universal agency for Bible-study. It would already hold that position, were it not for the unfortunate formation of separate denominational organizations, such as the Epworth League, the Luther League, the Baptist Young People's Union.

In using the adjective, "unfortunate," I must not be understood as applying it to "denominational," but to "separate." No one has objected to the formation of denominational young people's organizations, but to their organization in such a way as to draw the young people off from the interdenominational movement. The Disciples of Christ, for instance, have a strong national Christian Endeavor Union, with its officers, its newspaper

organ, and its own distinctive work, controlled solely by the denomination. So have the Friends. So have the Methodist Protestants. So have the English Lutherans. These denominational Christian Endeavor unions accomplish everything that could be accomplished by an organization of a separatist name and purpose, while at the same time they hold their young people closely to the larger Christian Endeavor fellowship.

Suppose that, instead of an Epworth League, a national Methodist Christian Endeavor Union had been established,—or Epworth Christian Endeavor Union, if any one preferred. Is it possible to name a single denominational end that would not have been gained? Could not denominational officers have been elected, a denominational newspaper and other literature have been established, denominational conventions have been held, and all denominational objects have been pushed? Keeping in mind the well-known and greatly admired Methodist system and loyalty, does any one believe that isolation from other churches is necessary for them, in order to carry out denominational ends? And if even now the desires of thousands of Methodist pastors and young people should be granted, and the Epworth League

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should become (in spirit and in name) the Epworth League of Christian Endeavor, as it is in Canada and always has been, would the Epworth League lose anything? The only result would be that the Methodists, as our largest American denomination, would gain a powerful influence in the interdenominational young people's movement, and receive from it the stimulus and suggestiveness of Christian brotherhood that no church, however large, can afford to neglect or despise.

I speak of the Epworth League because it led in this movement, being the first to draw away from Christian Endeavor, and also because it is the only young people's society that refuses to accept Christian Endeavor societies, or to allow its societies to become affiliated with Christian Endeavor unions. Nominally, at least, all the other separate denominational organizations are more liberal. The Baptist Young People's Union is the type of all the others. It will accept Baptist Christian Endeavor societies without change of name, and it allows any society to become affiliated with the Christian Endeavor unions, either as a Baptist Christian Endeavor society or as a Baptist Union of Christian Endeavor. That is the position of the Luther League, the

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Young People's Christian Union of the United Presbyterians, and of all the other separate denominational organizations, so far as I know.

While such an arrangement is better than the absolute separation of the Epworth League, it often, in practice, amounts to about the same thing. It gives ample opportunity for the display of the sectarian spirit. The strong tendency is, for example, to consider a Baptist Young People's Union as more loyal to the Baptist Church than a Baptist Christian Endeavor society, and the slow and quiet, but effective, tendency is to draw all the young people's societies over to the distinctive denominational organization and away from the interdenominational fellowship. It would be far wiser, far more Christian, far better for the Kingdom of God, if every denominational society should become a denominational Christian Endeavor union.

The analogy of the Sunday school throws light upon the subject. Why is it found feasible for all denominations to establish Sunday schools, and unite in county, State, national, and international Sunday-school organizations? Why does not every consideration that led to the formation of Epworth Leagues, suggest

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the formation of Epworth Bible Schools, and the withdrawal of the Methodists from association with the Sunday schools of other denominations? Why should not the Sunday-school organization split up into Scrooby Guilds, and Bedford Brotherhoods, and Wittenberg Leagues, and Westminster Associations, for the study of the Bible under distinctive denominational auspices? How can we venture to permit an interdenominational committee to select our Sunday-school lessons for us? How dare we risk the contagion of interdenominational Sunday-school conventions!

Every denomination has its own Sunday-school board, its own Sunday-school secretaries and editors, its own Sunday-school journals and other literature, just as it would have its own Christian Endeavor paraphernalia if it united in the Christian Endeavor fellowship. *The Epworth Herald* would not lose a single subscriber if it should become *The Epworth Endeavorer*, or *The Epworth C. E. Herald*. The bishop who presides over the Epworth Leagues would not lose a particle of authority and influence. *Nothing* would be lost, but much would be gained. Does any one seriously think that the existence and work of *The Sunday School Times* lessens Methodist control of

Methodist Sunday schools? Neither would *The Christian Endeavor World* lessen denominational influence, or the power of the denominational organ, if every Epworth League became an Epworth League of Christian Endeavor. The United Society of Christian Endeavor and its conventions would no more weaken Methodist control of Methodist young people's societies than the International Lesson Committee and the many Sunday-school conventions affect injuriously Methodist Sunday schools. There is absolutely no escape from this analogy.

Sometimes, when it is urged that all young people's societies should enter the Christian Endeavor fellowship, an attempt is made to show that Christian Endeavor is not organized broadly enough to be the universal bond of young people's religious organizations. It has been said, for example, that the name, "Christian Endeavor," is insisted upon. But what would you have? *Some* name must be used. Many local workers prefer to say *Bible* school, but the International movement has adopted the term *Sunday* school, and adheres to it, simply because the majority prefer it. If the majority of workers in the Christian Endeavor fellowship came at any time to prefer another

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name, the matter is in their hands ; they could drop the name "Christian Endeavor," and take what name they chose.

No one is proposing that denominational societies drop any name for which they have come to have an affection. "Epworth" is dear to the Methodist ; for that matter, it is dear to all Christians that know the holy associations of the word. But would "Epworth League" be less precious if it became in the United States what it is in Canada, "Epworth League of Christian Endeavor," or even "Epworth Christian Endeavor Society" ? Would not that combination be pleasing to the spirit of the great leader who desired "a league, offensive and defensive," with all the sons of God ?

As a matter of fact, the only other name that has been suggested is Young People's Alliance, or Federation. Some have thought that this term would be broader than "Christian Endeavor Union," and would more effectively bind together all young people's societies. No reasons have been given why "Alliance" or "Federation" is better than "Union," or why "Christian Endeavor" should be struck out. Certainly the name proposed is bare and cold, and certainly, though it has been persistently suggested by some Methodist writers,

it has failed to arouse a particle of enthusiasm. Still, as I say, if the interdenominational body chose to discard "Christian Endeavor" for any other name, it could do so. At present, however, it manifestly prefers the term endeared by history and beautiful in its own inspiring suggestiveness.

For it must not be forgotten that a great interdenominational alliance or federation of young people's societies already exists,—the only one that has ever existed, or seems at all likely to arise,—the United Society of Christian Endeavor in America, and the World's Christian Endeavor Union. At the present writing the distribution of Christian Endeavor societies among the denominations of the United States and Canada is as follows:—

Baptist.....	3,515
Free Baptist.....	586
Seventh-Day Baptist.....	85
Christian Connection and Disciples of Christ.....	5,887
Church of God.....	163
Congregational.....	6,446
Episcopal.....	33
Reformed Episcopal.....	51
Evangelical Association.....	197
Friends.....	661
Lutheran.....	1,317
Mennonite.....	25



## The Pastor and the Society at Large 99

Methodist Episcopal.....	969
African Methodist.....	863
Primitive Methodist .....	35
Methodist Protestant .....	1,387
Methodist, South .....	210
Wesleyan Methodist .....	38
Moravian .....	148
Presbyterian (North and South) .....	9,518
Cumberland Presbyterian .....	1,592
Reformed Presbyterian .....	103
Scotch Presbyterian .....	8
United Presbyterian .....	442
Progressive Brethren .....	89
Reformed (Dutch) .....	1,034
Reformed (German).....	489
United Brethren.....	847
United Evangelical.....	578
Union .....	3,921
Undenominational.....	2,689
Public Institutions .....	205
Floating Societies .....	38
United States Army.....	12
<hr/>	
Total.....	44,181

With that list before us, how absurd seems the contention that "Christian Endeavor is a Congregational society, and has no claims to universal adoption." Christian Endeavor must originate in some one denomination, and that was the Congregational, but in nearly every country some other denomination has taken the lead. The Baptists, Methodists, Lutherans, and Presbyterians are at the head of the movement, if

one regards numerical preponderance in the lands where Christian Endeavor chiefly flourishes. In Australia, the Methodists lead; in England, the Baptists; in Germany, the Lutherans; in the United States, the Presbyterians. The Congregationalists have the honor of founding the movement, but the denomination is not large enough to control it if it wanted to.

The control of Christian Endeavor in its national aspects is vested in a large body of trustees, representing every denomination and every section. Each denomination that has Christian Endeavor societies has at least one trustee, nominated, if possible, by the central denominational assembly. Then, for every thousand societies, the denomination has an additional trustee. Still further, to insure geographical representation, the president of each State, Territorial, and Provincial union is a trustee during his term of office. It is hard to see how any interdenominational society could be organized upon a broader or fairer basis.

Some pastors have hesitated to organize their young people as Christian Endeavor societies because they feared that the influence of the interdenominational organization might in

## The Pastor and the Society at Large 101

some way prevent their own control of the local work. No instance of the realization of such a fear can be cited. On the other hand, the United Society has always refrained from the least intermeddling with local or denominational interests, always upholding zealously the authority of the pastor and of the other church officers and the denominational boards. Inquiry will substantiate this statement and indefinitely emphasize it. Christian Endeavor has always been true to its noble motto, "For Christ and the Church." No other church organization, not even the Sunday school, not even the missionary society, the ladies' aid society, or the maternal association, pledges its members to support the church and attend all its regular services.

Indeed, a little practical consideration will show how impossible it would be for the United Society to impair the authority and control of the pastor, even if it wanted to. There are at present 44,181 Christian Endeavor societies in the United States. Merely to send them a single printed communication would cost \$441.81 for postage, using one-cent stamps, and as much more for printing the message and addressing the envelopes, while if return postage were inclosed, which is the only way

to get a reply,—and even then only a small part *do* reply,—the cost of this one communication would be \$1,767.24. The national organ, *The Christian Endeavor World*, has only between 90,000 and 100,000 subscribers, and what are they among the millions of Endeavorers? The United Society does send a communication to every society once every two years, asking for statistics. Usually, that is all it can afford. It has no funds except what the handful of workers in the Boston office—some half a dozen persons with their clerks—can earn by the sale of Christian Endeavor supplies and *The Christian Endeavor World*. The Y. M. C. A., the W. C. T. U., the Sunday schools, have ten, twenty, or thirty paid workers to every one in the employ of Christian Endeavor. This fear of undue influence on the part of the United Society is a man of straw. There is no disposition to exert it. There is no way, if there were the disposition.

Some pastors, again, hesitate to adopt the Christian Endeavor society because they do not wish to have methods forced upon them, and be obliged to work with their young people in ways which they do not approve. They point to the large number of Christian Endeavor committees, and the many causes which

## The Pastor and the Society at Large 103

Christian Endeavor pushes in one way or another, such as missionary, temperance, civic betterment, Bible-study, larger giving, evangelism, work in prisons, work with sailors, international arbitration, and so on. It does look confusing, it must be acknowledged, because Christian Endeavor has a hand in all good movements, and co-operates in no half-way fashion.

But take the committees. There are literally scores of different kinds of committees that have been found useful in Christian Endeavor societies, and that therefore are advocated by the United Society in its books and pamphlets. But no society is obliged to use them. All societies are free to adopt the Model Constitution, or modify it, or reject it altogether. The first thing I did, in connection with the Christian Endeavor society, was to take the Model Constitution and cut it to pieces for my local society. To be sure, a few years' experience showed me the unwisdom of most of my changes, and my society returned to the methods that the majority of societies had found most useful; but no one prevented the experiment, and, indeed, no one cared to prevent it. One of the most honored of Christian Endeavor societies—a society honored

for the very good reason that *more than one hundred of its members have gone forth as foreign missionaries*, and many have become martyrs in that glorious cause—has existed for years with only one committee, and with no president but the pastor. Other societies have found many committees useful, and a succession of officers. The United Society never recommends a plan until it is sure it will help many societies, perhaps the majority; but it knows, being made up of sensible men, that no method is best for all circumstances. As a matter of fact, though the societies and their pastors do receive the suggestions of the United Society officials as worth careful consideration,—and it is to be hoped they always will,—yet no society has ever adopted all of them, or even the majority of them.

In fine, the United Society, with the State and local unions, merely acts as a clearing house of useful methods. It discovers them, from everywhere. It publishes them. And the societies take them and use them as they see fit. This function of the United Society greatly promotes the development of work with the young. Indeed, the historian will see that the United Society has actually created that work by its discovery and ad-

## The Pastor and the Society at Large 105

vocacy of wise methods. But in the entire process there is nothing to prevent any pastor from making his Christian Endeavor society precisely the kind of society he desires to have, or his denomination desires him to have.

We are continually hearing of experiments in young people's societies. Generally the pastor seems to think that in order to make them he must disband his Christian Endeavor society and start something with a new name, isolated from the great body of workers with young people. That is a great mistake. It results in hard feelings in the local church, and it injures the progress of the general movement for the training of young people. If any pastor thinks he can better his Christian Endeavor society, we are all glad to have him try it, within the Christian Endeavor circle. Probably *The Christian Endeavor World* will not publish an article lauding his experiment while it is an experiment; but if experience proves its value, the new method will be taken up and advocated, as hundreds of new methods have been taken up and advocated during past years.

As a matter of fact, these societies that are formed in this way by pastors that impatiently disband their Christian Endeavor societies and

form organizations altogether new, have uniformly "petered out" after a few months or years. Not a single one of them has spread beyond the church in which it originated. This is not to say that new and valuable methods may not be brought to light by some society outside of Christian Endeavor—that would be absurd ; but it is to say that, thus far, nothing has been accomplished by these separatist organizations that seems to commend any one of them to other workers. There are several reasons for these failures, and those reasons are at the same time the reasons for the abiding success of Christian Endeavor. The most of these separatist societies are not *religious* enough. They substitute literary or social features very largely for the great prayer meeting rallying point of Christian Endeavor. They are for self-culture, or for a good time ; they are not primarily for Christ and the Church. They do not appeal to those young people that alone can furnish a permanent nucleus of a young people's society,—the religious enthusiasts, the whole-hearted disciples. Christian Endeavor includes literary and social elements in the proper proportion, but it wins and holds the young not through these but through its high and strenuous religious ideals.



## The Pastor and the Society at Large 107

And besides, quite uniformly these new societies that fail are not the unforced choice of the young people, the natural evolution of their own ideas, but they are schemes imposed upon them from without. Christian Endeavor has succeeded very largely because the young people feel that it is *their* society. It bears for them the romance of discovery, the charm of ownership. Other young people come to them, and ask them to join. They "run" it. The pastor is there, to be sure, but he is an honored comrade, not a "boss." They elect their own officers, adopt their own plans, gladly sign their own pledge. They feel responsible for the society, because it is their own. Its honor is theirs. It never occurs to them to ask help, but to give it. I have never heard of a Christian Endeavor society's even desiring an appropriation of money from the church; I do not believe there is a society in existence that is not continually giving money to the church and the denomination.

Now it is this feeling of ownership and responsibility that renders the Christian Endeavor society an object of dislike to those pastors that are desirous of being "bosses," and those denominations that are fond of strict and omnipresent denominational machinery.

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But therein, nevertheless, lies the secret of the success of Christian Endeavor—that it is self-perpetuating. The pastor may go, but the Christian Endeavor pledge does not go. The society still holds its weekly meetings, as well attended as ever, though all the other activities of the church may feel the lack of pastoral oversight. Nay, in how many hundreds of cases has the Christian Endeavor society alone kept up the church in such emergencies, maintained the church services, and held the congregation together till another pastor could be obtained!

But these new societies represent quite uniformly the fad of the pastor. They spring from some philosophical theory of his about the religious education of the young. He draws up the constitution, to which they obediently assent. In the majority of cases that have come under my observation, the society becomes a mere lecture course, with the pastor for lecturer. Church history is studied, or religious art, or the great books of English literature. This is all valuable and fascinating, and it would be fine if it were done in connection with every Christian Endeavor society; but it is not essentially different from another sermon. The element of unforced, enthusi-

## The Pastor and the Society at Large 109

astic, self-moved, original work for Christ is lacking. When the pastor grows tired of lecturing, when he ceases to pour his vitality into the society, or when he moves away, in every instance the society dies, and the church is left without a young people's society, or else Christian Endeavor again steps in.

The method is at variance with all true pedagogy. Any teacher knows that what the pupil does for himself and on his own initiative is worth, ten times over, the best and wisest that he can do for the pupil. Christian Endeavor pastors recognize that principle in the conduct of these training schools. They could conduct the prayer meetings, the business meetings, the committee work, the union work, oh, so much better than these crude and bungling young Christians; but they resolutely keep hands off, save for such guidance as I have indicated in this book. They know that the only way for the young people to learn is to *do*.

And a third reason why these separate and sporadic societies have failed is because they have ignored the mighty force of Christian fellowship. Christian Endeavor from the beginning has used this and believed in it, and that is still another reason for its success.

To pastors that are considering the adoption or rejection of Christian Endeavor I would say with all earnestness, More is involved, far more, than your local needs and preferences. Not lightly to be cast aside is an organization which has proved of pre-eminent usefulness in all denominations and all lands ; especially in these days when Christians are beginning to give prayerful heed to that last prayer of our Lord for His disciples throughout time, "that they all may be one."

I have given the list of the thirty denominations in the United States in which the Christian Endeavor society is found. Our statistics from other lands are not detailed denominationally, and those countries, fortunately, are not so cut up into sects as is the United States, but we are well within bounds by doubling the United States figures, and saying that, all over the world, Christian Endeavor has entered sixty different denominations, in the large majority of which it is the only type of young people's society.

Moreover, Christian Endeavor has been found adapted to all nations, languages, races, and climes. Look at this list of the distribution of Christian Endeavor societies over the globe :—

# The Pastor and the Society at Large 111

Africa.....	224
Australia.....	3,960
Austria.....	19
Barbadoes .....	2
Belgium .....	3
Bermudas.....	7
Brazil .....	62
British Guiana.....	11
Bulgaria.....	15
Burma .....	15
Canada.....	4,215
Caroline Islands .....	3
Chile.....	6
China .....	188
Colombia.....	5
Costa Rica .....	10
Cuba .....	14
Denmark .....	4
Egypt .....	5
Ellice Islands .....	7
Finland .....	19
Formosa.....	1
France .....	105
Germany .....	252
Gibraltar .....	3
Gilbert Islands.....	4
Great Britain and Ireland.....	10,400
Grenada, West Indies.....	2
Guatemala.....	3
Haiti .....	1
Hawaiian Islands.....	54
Holland .....	3
Hungary .....	13
India .....	567
Italy .....	7
Jamaica .....	250

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Japan .....	115
Korea .....	12
Labrador .....	1
Laos .....	29
Lapland .....	1
Loyalty Islands .....	25
Madagascar .....	93
Madeira Islands.....	1
Marshall Islands .....	21
Mauritius.....	1
Mexico .....	112
Newfoundland .....	2
Norway .....	5
Palestine .....	1
Panama .....	1
Philippine Islands.....	6
Persia .....	35
Porto Rico.....	4
Portugal.....	3
Russia.....	10
Samoa.....	19
Siam .....	2
Spain .....	47
Sweden.....	148
Switzerland.....	20
Syria.....	17
Tokelau Islands.....	3
Trinidad.....	14
Turkey .....	75
United States.. .....	44,181
<hr/>	
Total .....	65,463

One of the strongest evidences of the correctness of Christian Endeavor methods is the

fact that they have proved equally valuable under all these circumstances, as varied as circumstances could well be. The Brazilian or the Spanish convert from Romanism, the Zulu in his kraal, the Chinese under the sword of the Boxer, the Hindu beneath the shadow of Buddha, the Armenian that dare not even use the word "constitution," under the Southern Cross, amid Arctic snows, in prisons, on battle-ships, in factories and business offices, in New York and in the lumber-camp, in cathedrals and at the foot of the Pyramids,—everywhere the simple forms of our society have proved fundamental, adapted to universal nature, and productive of the same whole-souled Christian testimony and living. Missionaries by the hundred, among the most eminent in all denominations and fields, have written their conviction that no better agency exists for the training of the native converts. Pastors by the thousand in the homeland have echoed the testimony with reference to their own young people.

These wide aspects of the Society are not to be ignored by any pastor that wishes to fill his young people with zeal for the one Church of Christ, the one Kingdom of God. Here in Christian Endeavor you have the only con-

crete realization of our Christian brotherhood, that binds together all denominations and all lands. The practical value of our local, State, and national unions and conventions is great. They have done much to popularize the best methods. They spread the spirit of evangelism. They promote devotion. They arouse zeal for missions, temperance, Christian citizenship, Bible-study. They train the young in the management of large interests and the conduct of great gatherings. But their chief value, after all, is in firing every soul with a sense of the great Church Universal, with a passion for the Kingdom of God and a longing for its triumph in all the earth. Christian Endeavor is the best training the world has yet seen for church federation and vital union. That is, at bottom, the reason why in some quarters it is strenuously opposed.

But the majority of pastors do not sympathize with such opposition. The majority of pastors, in honest eagerness of soul, join our Lord in the prayer "that they all may be one." The majority of pastors, the vast majority, would gladly and promptly lay down their lives to advance in any degree the coming of Christ's kingdom on earth.

I am sure that there are few pastors, if any,



## The Pastor and the Society at Large 115

of those to whom this book will come, that will not assent unreservedly to the ideals I have described as those of Christian Endeavor. They are sincerely desirous of the best for their dear young people. They are impatient of anything below the best. They are rightfully jealous for the youth committed to their care, and scrutinize warily all methods of work proposed for them and for the church. They know well that the influences surrounding the young fix beyond recall the character of the church of the future.

With such pastors I leave fearlessly the considerations I have advanced. I know that they will be weighed with care, investigated with thoroughness, tested with patience, and, if found true and good, adopted with enthusiasm. Of Christian Endeavor, as of all methods and organizations, we may repeat with confidence Gamaliel's observation concerning the early church: "If this counsel or this work be of men, it will be overthrown: but if it is of God, ye will not be able to overthrow it; lest haply ye be found even to be fighting against God."



## BOOKS FOR PASTORS

**Help for the Tempted.** By Amos R. Wells. Paper covers, 15c. Ten copies, \$1.00. Cloth binding, 75c. Leather binding, full gilt, in a box, \$1.25.

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**Christian Endeavor Manual, The.** By Rev. Francis E. Clark, D.D. 306 pp. Cloth, durably bound, \$1.00.

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